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Message Text

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FM USMISSION OECD PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASH DC IMMEDIATE 0967
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 OECD PARIS 06748

DEPT PASS LABOR AND TREASURY

E.O. 1L652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, OECD
SUBJECT: OECD LABOR MINISTERIAL ADOPTS FINAL COMMUNIQUE

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF COMMUNIQUE ADOPTED MARCH 5 BY OECD MANPOWER AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL.

BEGIN TEXT:
1. THE SERIOUS EMPLOYMENT SITUATION WAS THE CENTRAL ISSUE AT THE FIRST MINISTERIAL-LEVEL MEETING OF THE OECD COMMITTEE OF MANPOWER AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS, WHICH WAS HELD IN PARIS ON 4TH AND 5TH MARCH UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF M. MICHEL DURAFOUR, MINISTER OF LABOR OF FRANCE. THE VICE-CHAIRMEN WERE THE HON. ROBERT K. ANDRAS, P.C., M.P., MINISTER OF MANPOWER AND IMMIGRATION, CANADA; MR. CONSTANTINOS LASKARIS, MINISTER OF LABOR, GREECE; AND MR. INGEMUND BENGTSSON, MINISTER OF LABOR, SWEDEN.

2. MINISTERS REAFFIRMED THE COMMITMENT OF THEIR GOVERN-
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MENTS TO FULL EMPLOYMENT AS A MAIN GOAL OF POLICY, FOR

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WHICH THE RESTORATION OF ADEQUATE LEVELS OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY, WITH THE PROGRESSIVE REDUCTION OF INFLATION, IS A MAJOR CONDITION.

3. THEY NOTED THAT, NOTWITHSTANDING THE VARYING RATES OF ECONOMIC RECOVERY IN THE OECD COUNTRIES, THE REDUCTION OF UNEMPLOYMENT MAY INITIALLY BE DELAYED BECAUSE IN THE EARLY PHASE OF THE RECOVERY ENTERPRISES WILL FIRST TEND TO USE EXISTING MANPOWER MORE FULLY AND, IN SOME COUNTRIES, BECAUSE OF THE IMPACT OF STRUCTURAL CHANGES.

4. IN THIS SITUATION, MINISTERS STRESSED THAT A SUBSTANTIAL RECOVERY OF EMPLOYMENT WILL DEPEND NOT ONLY ON THE EXPANSION OF DEMAND, BUT ALSO ON RELATED SPECIAL ACTIONS BY EMPLOYMENT AND MANPOWER AUTHORITIES, TO STIMULATE THE CREATION OF JOBS AND TO ASSIST WORKERS TO ACQUIRE THE SKILLS AND MOVE INTO THE JOBS NEEDED AS PART OF THE ECONOMIC UPSWING.

5. MINISTERS EMPHASIZED THAT IN SOME COUNTRIES THERE IS A NEED FOR MORE ACTIVE POLICIES AIMED AT THE PROVISION OF SOCIALLY USEFUL AND ECONOMICALLY ACCEPTABLE ALTERNATIVES TO UNEMPLOYMENT. THEY STRESSED IN PARTICULAR THAT MANPOWER TRAINING COULD HELP THE UNEMPLOYED AND NEW ENTRANTS TO THE LABOR MARKET TO ACQUIRE SKILLS NEEDED TO ENTER EXPANDING SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY. TEMPORARY AND SELECTIVE SUBSIDIES TO ENTERPRISES OR REDUCTIONS OF CHARGES ON THEIR PAYROLLS SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE USED OR TESTED AS A MEANS TO LOWER THE COSTS TO EMPLOYERS OF EXPANDING OR MAINTAINING EMPLOYMENT DURING THE ECONOMIC UPSWING. OTHER POSSIBILITIES INCLUDE JOB-CREATION PROGRAMS IN THE PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS, COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT PROJECTS AND INCREASED EXPENDITURE ON PUBLIC WORKS. IN ANY POLICY TO ASSIST THE UNEMPLOYED, MINISTERS STRESSED THE NEED FOR SPECIAL ACTION TO ENSURE THAT DISADVANTAGED GROUPS GET THEIR FAIR SHARE OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES.

6. LOOKING BEYOND THE IMMEDIATE SITUATION, MINISTERS AGREED THAT THE CHALLENGE FACING THE OECD COUNTRIES
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IS NOT ONLY TO REDUCE UNEMPLOYMENT AND AVOID RENEWED INFLATION, BUT ALSO TO ACHIEVE FULL EMPLOYMENT IN WAYS RELEVANT TO EMERGING SOCIAL ASPIRATIONS AND NEW ECONOMIC CONDITIONS. THE ESSENTIAL GOAL SHOULD BE SATISFYING AND SOCIALLY USEFUL CAREERS FOR ALL. THIS WILL INVOLVE POLICIES TO INCREASE THE NUMBER AND THE QUALITY OF JOBS, AND TO FACILITATE THE BALANCE BETWEEN WORK, EDUCATION AND LEISURE THAT WILL ASSIST LONG-TERM ADJUST-

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MENT BETWEEN THE AVAILABILITY OF JOBS AND THE SUPPLY OF LABOR, BEARING IN MIND THE NEEDS, ASPIRATIONS, AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF ALL GROUPS IN SOCIETY.

7. TO THIS END, MINISTERS AGREED THAT THERE WOULD BE

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A NEED TO PURSUE OR, WHERE APPROPRIATE, TO CONSIDER NEW POLICIES IN AREAS SUCH AS: EQUITY IN ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES; A WIDER RANGE OF INTERRELATED EDUCATION AND WORK OPTIONS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE; IMPROVEMENT OF WORKING CONDITIONS AND THE CONTENT OF JOBS, ESPECIALLY FOR THE LESS-SKILLED OCCUPATIONS; TRAINING AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADULTS, SO AS TO HELP THEM TO FURTHER DEVELOP AS INDIVIDUALS AND ADJUST THEIR SKILLS TO ECONOMIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE; INCREASED FLEXIBILITY OF CAREER, EDUCATIONAL AND RETIREMENT PATTERNS FOR ALL.

8. MINISTERS AGREED THAT THE ABOVE SHORT-TERM AND MEDIUM-TERM GOALS CAN ONLY BE ATTAINED IF THE OECD

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COUNTRIES HAVE EFFICIENT AND ADAPTABLE ECONOMIES, WITH ADEQUATE RATES OF GROWTH AND EQUITY IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME. THEY AGREED THAT EMPLOYMENT AND MANPOWER POLICIES CAN MAKE AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO THIS END BY HELPING TO MODERATE INFLATIONARY PRESSURES, BY RECONCILING EMPLOYMENT SECURITY WITH THE MOBILITY NEEDED TO RESPOND TO NEW ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES, AND
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BY DEVELOPING THE SKILLS NEEDED AS PART OF ECONOMIC GROWTH. CLOSER LINKAGES BETWEEN EMPLOYMENT AND MANPOWER POLICY AND ALL RELEVANT DOMAINS OF ECONOMIC POLICY ARE THEREFORE NEEDED AS PART OF AN EFFECTIVE EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY. THE EMPLOYMENT AND MANPOWER SERVICES OF MEMBER COUNTRIES NEED TO BE STRENGTHENED TO PLAY THEIR CENTRAL ROLE IN SUCH A STRATEGY,.BEARING IN MIND VARIATIONS IN THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT AND IN THE INSTITUTIONAL SETTING BETWEEN COUNTRIES.

9. MINISTERS REQUESTED THAT THE OECD SHOULD ASSIST MEMBER COUNTRIES TO MONITOR EMPLOYMENT TRENDS AND POOL INFORMATION ON POLICIES ADOPTED TO COMBAT UNEMPLOYMENT AND MODERATE INFLATION.

10. MINISTERS AGREED ON THE NEED FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION SO AS TO AVOID BEGGAR-THY-NEIGHBOR POLICIES IN THE EMPLOYMENT FIELD. FOR EXAMPLE, MAJOR CHANGES IN MIGRATION FLOWS BETWEEN SOME EUROPEAN MEMBER COUNTRIES AND COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN, SO THAT THE BURDEN OF ADJUSTMENT CAN BE MORE EQUITABLY SHARED,AND ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PROMOTED. MINISTERS DECIDED THAT THESE QUESTIONS OF MIGRATION BETWEEN EUROPEAN MEMBER COUNTRIES SHOULD BE STUDIED BY THE EXISTING BODIES OF THE ORGANIZATION, STRENGTHENED IF NECESSARY BY THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A HIGH LEVEL AD HOC GROUP.

11. EMPLOYMENT AND MANPOWER POLICIES MAY HAVE AN IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY IN ENABLING OECD MEMBER COUNTRIES TO CONTINUE THE TREND TOWARDS FREER INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND INVESTMENT. IN PARTICULAR WORKERS IN INDUSTRIES AFFECTED SHOULD BE ASSISTED TO ADAPT TO STRUCTURAL CHANGES RESULTING FROM CHANGING PATTERNS OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE, BEARING IN MIND THE EVOLVING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

12. MANPOWER AND EMPLOYMENT POLICIES DIRECTLY AFFECT THE INTERESTS OF BOTH EMPLOYERS AND WORKERS. MINISTERS THEREFORE AGREED THAT THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THESE POLICIES REQUIRE CONTINUING COOPERATION AND

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INVOLVEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE BUSINESS AND LABOR ORGANIZATIONS IN FORMS APPROPRIATE TO EACH COUNTRY'S INSTITUTIONS.

13. IN ORDER TO GIVE EFFECT TO THE ABOVE CONCLUSIONS MINISTERS AGREED ON THE ATTACHED OECD RECOMMENDATION ON A GENERAL EMPLOYMENT AND MANPOWER POLICY, WHICH CALLS ON MEMBER COUNTRIES TO TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION.
END TEXT.

14. ANNEX WILL BE ATTACHED TO COMMUNIQUE INDICATING THAT MINISTERS AGREED THAT OECD CONSIDER FURTHER THE FOLLOWING:
A. FRENCH PROPOSAL THAT GROUP OF EXPERTS STUDY ALTERNATIVE MANPOWER AND EMPLOYMENT POLICY OPTIONS FOR A RANGE OF GROWTH RATE SCENARIOS;
B. TURKISH PROPOSAL THAT OECD CONSIDER ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AD HOC HIGH LEVEL GROUP TO STUDY MIGRATION QUESTIONS;
C. GREEK PROPOSAL THAT MSAC CONSIDER FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING OECD FUND TO ASSIST REPATRIATION OF MIGRANT WORKERS (WITHIN EUROPEAN AREA). TURNER

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